CLAIMS

1. A method for automatically advancing an audio/video signal past undesirable material comprising the steps of:

(A) detecting possible triggering events during encoding of said audio/video signal;

(B) generating one or more scores of various levels in response to said triggering events; and

(C) advancing past said undesirable material during playback in response to one of said scores.

2. The method according to claim 1, wherein step (A) comprises detecting synchronized audio and video statistics from both an audio portion and a video portion of said audio/video signal.

3. The method according to claim 1, wherein said method further comprises the step of:

adapting one or more thresholds and detection criteria used to generate said one or more scores.

4. The method according to claim 1, wherein said method comprises a semi-automatic mode wherein said advancing is started in response to a user input.

5. The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of:

inserting alternate material in place of material advanced past in step (C).

6. The method according to claim 5, wherein step (C) is enabled or disabled in response to a user input.

7. The method according to claim 1, wherein one of said scores is used to generate a playlist used to determine a particular portion of the undesirable material to skip.

8. The method according to claim 1, wherein step (A) further comprises recording said encoded audio/video signal.

9. The method according to claim 1, wherein step (A) includes events occurring at the beginning of said undesirable material and at the end of said undesirable material.

10. The method according to claim 1, wherein said undesirable material comprises advertisements.

11. The method according to claim 1, wherein step (C) replaces said undesirable material with alternate material.

12. The method according to claim 1, wherein a particular one of said scores is used to determine how aggressive said method determines whether a triggering event is detected.

13. An apparatus comprising:

a detector circuit configured to generate (i) an audio/video data signal and (ii) one or more score signals of various levels in response to an input signal; and

a data storage device configured to (i) store said audio/video data signal and (ii) generate an output signal in

response to (a) said stored audio/video signal and (b) one of said score signals.

14. The apparatus according to claim 1, wherein said apparatus is integrated into an audio/video playback system.

15. The apparatus according to claim 13, wherein said data storage device generates said output signal in further response to a user input.

16. The apparatus according to claim 13, wherein said data storage device comprises a random access storage device.

17. The apparatus according to claim 13, wherein said data storage device comprises a hard disk drive.

18. The apparatus according to claim 13, wherein said data storage device comprises an optical disk drive.

19. The apparatus according to claim 13, wherein said detector circuit comprises an audio processor and a video processor

each configured to detect triggering events used to generate said scores.

20. The apparatus according to claim 19, wherein said apparatus further comprises an analyzer circuit configured to generate said scores in response to said triggering events.

21. An apparatus comprising:

means for generating (i) an audio/video data signal and (ii) one or more score signals of various levels in response to an input signal;

means for storing said audio/video data signal; and

means for generating an output signal in response to (a) said stored audio/video signal and (b) one of said score signals.